

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 00731 040518Z

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3831

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0731

EXDIS

FOR AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, SO

SUBJECT: PL 480 TITLE II FOR SOMALIA: AUDIT

SUMMARY: AID AUDITORS FROM NAIROBI HAVE REQUESTED OUR ASSIST-

ANCE IN SCHEDULING VISIT TO MOGADISCIO TO AUDIT SOMALI GOVERN-

MENT'S HANDLING OF PL 480 TITLE II COMMODITIES PROVIDED DURING
1974-75 DROUGHT EMERGENCY. I BELIEVE AID/W SHOULD CONSIDER
WAIVING AUDIT FOR THOSE COMMODITIES. AUDIT WOULD PROBABLY
BE UNSUCCESSFUL, AUDIT TEAM'S PRESENCE WOULD BE USED AGAINST
US BY THOSE HOSTILE TO US IN SOMALIA AND THESE RESULTS WOULD
COMPROMISE HUMANITARIAN NATURE OF US 1975 DROUGHT RELIEF
WHICH WAS MOST SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM WE'VE STAGED IN SOMALIA
IN YEARS. END SUMMARY.

1. AID AUDITORS FROM NAIROBI HAVE ASKED FOR OUR ASSISTANCE
IN SCHEDULING VISIT TO MOGADISCIO TO AUDIT SOMALI GOVERN-
MENT'S HANDLING OF COMMODITIES PROVIDED SDR DURING 1974-75
DROUGHT EMERGENCY. AS YOU WILL RECALL, DURING THAT CRISIS
WE RESPONDED QUICKLY AND GENEROUSLY TO SOMALI APPEAL FOR HELP
AND OUR AID WAS A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN FEEDING OVER 200,000
SOMALI NOMADS LEFT DESTITUTE BY DROUGHT.

2. THIS RELIEF EFFORT WAS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN SOMALIA,
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOGADI 00731 040518Z

WHERE FOR VARIETY OF REASONS OVER PAST YEARS WE HAVE HAD

LITTLE OR NO OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE TO SIAD REGIME INNOCENCE OF US INTENTIONS TOWARDS HIS GOVT. AID WAS SUSPENDED IN EARLY SEVENTIES AS RESULT OF SOMALI FLAG TRADE WITH VIETNAM; US AID AND MAP PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED HERE AS YET ANOTHER INDICATION OF US HOSTILITY TOWARDS SOMALIA. US THUS HAS HAD LITTLE FLEXIBILITY IN ITS ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE SIAD THAT WE ARE NOT RPT NOT ILL-DISPOSED TOWARDS HIS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AMBITIONS.

3. SOMALI DROUGHT EMERGENCY THUS PROVIDED US WITH OPPORTUNITY TO HELP SOMALIA UNCONDITIONALLY WITH ITS DISASTER PROBLEM. MAGNANIMITY OF OUR RESPONSE--SOME US\$ 11 MILLION IN EMERGENCY FOOD AID--CAME AS SURPRISE TO MANY SOMALIS, WHO HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE BY GSDR PROPAGANDA THAT US AID REQUIRED POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC CONCESSIONS FROM GSDR IN RETURN AND THAT SOMALI FAILURE TO GRATIFY US WAS IN FACT REASON US HAD SUSPENDED ITS AID PROGRAMS IN SOMALIA. OUR EMERGENCY FOOD RELIEF HELPED GIVE LIE TO THIS ASSUMPTION--AN ASSUMPTION SIAD HIMSELF SEEMED TO HAVE SHARED IN PAST.

4. DROUGHT EMERGENCY IS NOW OVER. DESPITE GSDR'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE US WITH DOCUMENTATION ON HANDLING OF OUR FOOD COMMODITIES, I AM SATISFIED ON BASIS OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US THROUGH UNDP AND OTHER UN AGENCIES THAT OUR COMMODITIES WERE WELL USED AND REACHED REFUGEE POPULATIONS FOR WHICH THEY WERE INTENDED. EVERY UN OBSERVER WHO TOURED COUNTRY-- AND THEY WERE LEGION--HAD HIGHEST PRAISE FOR DISCIPLINE AND INTEGRITY OF SOMALI DROUGHT RELIEF EFFORT. I HAVE NO RPT NO REASON TO LOOK BEHIND SDR'S FAILURE TO MEET ITS REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES.

5. ACCORDINGLY, I DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE THAT COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT OF PL 480 TITLE II COMMODITIES AT THIS POINT SERVES ANY PURPOSE EXCEPT TO AGAIN COMPLICATE OUR RELATIONS WITH SDR. GSDR HAS ALWAYS RESISTED ANY ATTEMPT BY OUTSIDERS TO LOOK INTO ITS BOOKS OR ITS BANK ACCOUNTS, AS WELL AS ITS WAREHOUSES. THIS IS PROBLEM WHICH UNDP AND IBRD HAVE LIVED WITH FOR YEARS BUT IT HAS NOT RPT NOT COMPROMISED THEIR WORK HERE, ALTHOUGH IT HAS GIVEN THEM PROBLEMS.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOGADI 00731 040518Z

6. SOMALI RESISTANCE TO ACCOMMODATING FOREIGN OBSERVERS DERIVES BOTH FROM THEIR EXAGGERATED SENSE OF WHAT CONSTITUTES QTE SOVEREIGNTY UNQTE AS WELL AS A REAL IF SLIGHTLY PARANOIAC SUSPICION OF OUTSIDERS' INTERESTS IN SOMALIA. WE ARE FOR BETTER OR WORSE THE OBSESSIVE TARGETS OF THAT PARANOIA AND SOMALI GOVT BELIEVES QUITE GENUINELY THAT DIVULGENCES ABOUT SOVIET BASE ACTIVITIES IN SOMALIA--TO TAKE ONE EXAMPLE-- ORIGINATE WITH US MISSION HERE. WHILE WE HAVE NO INTENTION

OF PANDERING TO THIS KIND OF DISTORTION, NEVERTHELESS WE TRY TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO REDUCE THEIR SUSPICIONS. THIS INCLUDES MINIMIZING THE NUMBER OF VISITORS TO MOGADISCIO.

7. OUR QUICK AND UNCONDITIONAL HELP TO SOMALIA DURING 1974-75 DROUGHT EMERGENCY WAS MOST POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENT US HAS MANAGED IN SOMALIA IN SOME YEARS. WHILE GSDR LEADERS MAY ATTEMPT TO PUBLICLY MINIMIZE OR IGNORE IT, MAGNITUDE OF US HELP IS KNOWN AND APPRECIATED BY SOMALIS. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD NOT NOW COMPROMISE EFFECTS OF THAT HUMANITARIAN AID BY ATTEMPTING AUDIT WHICH WILL PROBABLY NOT BE SUCCESSFUL AND WHICH WILL RAISE QUESTION IN OFFICIAL MINDS ABOUT US INTENTIONS. ACCORDINGLY, I RECOMMEND THAT AUDIT REQUIREMENT FOR 1975 PL 480 AID BE WAIVED.
LOUGHRAN

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